

Doings of Squan Creek Folk.

Joe Jones Relates How Abel Small Got to Be at the Head of the Liar's Club.

At the last annual election of the Liar's Club of Squan Creek, Abel Small was elected president by an overwhelming majority, and it is quite likely he will hold the position for two or three terms. Three years ago Abel was considered small fish as a liar. He lied a lie occasionally about claims and lobster, but never had anything to say at the meeting of the club. He improved as time went on, but was still way down to the foot of the class when Providence seemed to step in to give him a boost. That is, his wife burst out crying one evening and explained that all the neighbors looked down on her on this account. He was such an every-day, one-horse liar that she had no social standing. As he tried to console her she said:

"If I was you, I'd be either at the head or move out of town. I've stood it as long as I can, and if you don't do something I'll commit suicide."

"I'll do something," replied Abel, after thinking the matter over. "I've been goin' slow and gettin' the hang of things, but I'll do something in the next two weeks to put you in society or break my neck tryin'."

Abel had never displayed much ambition, and his wife was only half-comforted, but he went right on planning to surprise her and other folks. He went out in his boat after claims the next day and did not return. He landed on the beach far away and made for Philadelphia, and when he reached home in the night a week later he had a wonderful story to tell. He said he was tending for claims with his anchor out when a whale swallowed the anchor and towed him out to sea for a couple of hundred miles. All he



HE STUCK TO IT.

had to eat and drink for seven days, and he was half a bottle of cough-syrup, and he met with pirates and sharks, and hurricanes without number. It was a sneek, sleek lie, and so well told that some folks almost believed it. Abel's wife knew just where he had been, but she patted him on the back and said:

"At last you are doing something to help this family along. Keep right on tellin' that story, and don't take off a single shark or pirate if you die for it."

Henry Schermerhorn, John Tobias and Deacon Spooner got after Abel and tried to pick flaws in his story and make him own up, but they couldn't budge him. They sniffed at the whale, made fun of the pirates and proved by the weather reports that there hadn't even been a gale while he was gone, but he shut his jaw firmly and replied:

"Gentlemen, you may believe me or not, but it all happened just as I say. I'm sure the whale was ten feet longer than my fingers."

About ten days after Abel got home he was taken down with typhoid fever, and when the doctor said it was a very serious case, the sick man told his wife that he had better own up that the story was a lie. He didn't want to die with no such whopper charged against him.

"Abel, don't do it," she advised. "You are a sick man and are going to be sicker, but you must take chances of dyin'. You must do it for the sake of me and the children. The lie as it stands is the slickest ever told in Squan Creek, and women who used to pass me with their noses up now holler over the back fence and want to lend me their washboards. Hang on, Abel, till you are struck with death."

He said he would, and he meant it. After two or three nights he had to have watchers, and they laid their hands on his fevered brow and told him he was nearing the grave, and advised him to unburden his conscience. He owned up to having lied about seeing a lobster with wings and a clam with feet, but he wouldn't go any further. Even in his delirious moments he would cry out:

"Ha! ha! then bloody pirate, but sheer off or I will give you a broadside which will send you to the bottom before you can call upon Heaven for mercy!"

One day the doctor announced that Abel had less than 24 hours to live, and the dying man asked his wife if he hadn't better own up to the lie. She turned up the sheet to look at his face and advised him to hold on. The mails hadn't turned blue yet, and there was one chance in a thousand that he might pull through. The preacher came in presently to ask Abel if he was prepared for the great change about to take place, and it was:

"You know that it is written that no liar can inherit the kingdom of Heaven?"

"Yes, I know," replied the dying man, "but I can't be barred out on that account. I stole a dozen eggs once in my boyhood days, and maybe that will be held up agin me, but as for lyin', the recordin' angel won't have nothin' to do with it."

"But about the whale and pirate story?" asked the good man with a sad shake of the head.

"That was all true to the last word. I don't think I got the wind blowin' half as hard as it really did, and I

know I underestimated the number of pirates by at least 50."

The preacher wrangled with him for an hour, but Abel was firm. Instead of taking anything off the story he kept adding to it, and the good man finally left in despair. Abel began to weaken soon after that and wish he had owned up, but his wife looked at his toe-nails again and said:

"There isn't a mite of blue to be seen about 'em, and I don't believe you are goin' to die after all. Jest hang to your story like a dog to a root."

Well, Abel hung between life and death for two days, and then began to improve, and at the end of four days the doctor said he would get well. In ten days he was out of danger, and nobody knew what to think about it. Some said that he had been saved to give him time to repent, and others that he must have been telling the truth about the whale and the pirates, but he was lifted right up on the pinnacle of greatness. Deacon Spooner headed a subscription and raised \$50 for him, and the aristocracy called on Mrs. Small in such numbers that she couldn't get the Monday washing out until Friday. Abel was hardly fit to be out when the annual election of the Liar's Club came around, and six of the most prominent men in town escorted him down to the hall. There was but one sentiment, and that was voiced by William Shriner as he rose up and said:

"It will be no surprise when I say that we have among us a liar of whom we ought to be proud as a community. We are all liars, but we cannot equal him. There isn't another man among

us who wouldn't have crawled when he found death staring him in the face. Annulus wasn't slow, but he wasn't knee-high to the man I now present you as the next president of our club."

CHARLES B. LEWIS.

HE WAS NO HERO.

"I can't see how they make so much romance out of this railroad business," said the engineer, as he threw aside his newspaper. "Here is the case of the swept-away bridge over Wolf creek, and they have got it that I saved the train and am a hero. I could have told 'em how it was if they had come to me. We were driving ahead at full speed when I says to the fireman:

"George, what d'ye think about the creek?"

"I think it's bank-full and runnin' over," says he.

"How about the bridge?"

"I think it's gone, don't you?"

"Yes."

"Then you'd better stop at the post and let me go ahead and see."

"And I stopped and he went ahead," explained the engineer, "and pretty soon he comes back and says:

"Jim, she's gone."

"Then we can't go on?"

"Not unless a locomotive can swim!"

"That was the way of it and all there was to it, and I can't figure out how I saved 200 lives and deserve a gold medal. When I backed up to Christ-town to telegraph the news and wait for a wrecking train the division superintendent couldn't see the romance, either."

"What's the bloody row?" he says, as he comes out.

"Bridge gone."

"And why didn't you run your train into the creek?"

"My fireman didn't want to get wet."

"Mum! Bounce him for blocking the road, and don't you make another such mistake unless you want a year's vacation!"

IT WAS DECLINED.

"We shall have to decline the Geezers' invitation to their card party," wheezed Mrs. Gazzam.

"That's odd," replied Mr. Gazzam. "You enjoy playing so thoroughly."

"But I shouldn't enjoy it to-morrow night, for I'm so hoarse I can't speak above a whisper."—Detroit Free Press.

HE GOT OUT OF IT.

Hewitt—I don't believe in putting off until to-morrow what you can do today.

Jewett—Pay me that five dollars then.

Hewitt—The rule doesn't apply; that's something I can't do to-day.—Town Topics.

UNWELCOME REALIZATION.

I invited Pass Pilkington to go with me to hear one of the song recitals and she refused point blank.

"Don't you know why?" she was singing. "What Is Home Without a Mother?"

A few nights ago and her father came in and told her he had just married the cook."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

CORPORATION KINDNESS.

"Henry, can't you remonstrate about those two telephone poles on our sidewalk?"

"Gracious! no, Ellen. I'm just drafting a note of thanks to the company for not planting them in our front yard."—Detroit Free Press.

M QUAD'S FUN

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THE BICYCLERS DID IT.

"Why am I out of a job?" repeated the motorman with a catch in his voice and a nervous look around. "Well, that's dead easy of explanation. I got the bounce from headquarters, and I don't imagine I shall ever turn on the current again. If I was offered my place back to-morrow I'd hold it over for awhile."

"Have too many collisions?" was asked.

"It was the bicycle folks who brought about my downfall," he sorrowfully replied. "But for them I'd be on the front platform right now and feeling as chipper as you please. The climax had been slowly coming for two years, and I'm glad it's over. I got along all right with all the teams and all the pedestrians, but the bicyclers were my bane, as they are the bane of every other motorman. They kept at me till my nerve petered out and I could no longer make time on a car. Lord! but how I have suffered!"

Being asked how many bicyclers he had run down, he mopped his face with his handkerchief and replied:

"I have never touched one, and that's the singular part of it. It was the dozen close shaves a day for every day in the week, without about 20 on Sundays. I believe I have come within an inch of running down about 50 riders, and 500 times I have had my heart jump into my throat and almost suffocate me. You see, the average bicyclist, whether man, woman, boy or girl, don't give a fly for anything on wheels. They'll take chances to freeze your blood and depend upon luck to get through. I've been humping my car along at 12 miles an hour, and had 20 riders come whirling out of a side street and cross in front of me. It was as if the devil was after them, and rather than put on the brake, they'd let me come so high grinding 'em under the wheels that my hair would curl for hours. I've had 'em run slap into the side of the car a hundred times over, and always through their own carelessness, but I never run one down."

"And all this has shattered your nerves?"

"Says, old man, watch that had for a minute! It's all a tremble, and I'm feging all the time as if somebody was going to hit me. That's a case of nerves. You see, the close shaves I had by day always made me dream at night. Lands alive, but the number of bicyclers I've run down in my dreams would count up a thousand! I've seen corpses and blood-spots and broken wheels until I awoke with a yell and wanted to run away. I don't believe there has been a night in the last six months that I haven't picked up a rider in my dreams and heard 'em yell out as the wheels ground over 'em, and I've had visions too horrible to tell of. All last week I was behind time. Every time I got up speed I grew afraid of running somebody down. The conductor scolded, the passengers kicked and the manager gave me 24 hours to get my nerve back. On my very first trip yesterday morning I ticked the hind wheel of a bike with my cow-catcher, and after that I went all to pieces. Maybe a lay-off for a few weeks will bring my nerve back, but if it don't I'll go to driving an ice wagon. They are the only things on wheels a bicyclist will turn out for, and if they happen to run over anybody there's no great fuss made about it."

AN ENTERTAINING TIME.

About seven o'clock in the evening the villagers began to drop into the tavern, and when about 30 of them had come together they proceeded to organize a fire company. They had no engine or other apparatus, but they organized just the same, and when a foreman had been elected there were loud calls for a speech and a demand that he outline his policy.

"Gentlemen," he began, as he mounted a chair, "it is needless to say that this is the proudest moment of my life, and that I would not exchange places with the president of the United States. As to my policy—"

"Yes, give us your policy!" was shouted.

"As to my policy, I shall use every endeavor to lower our taxes."

"Whoop! Whoop-ee!" was yelled on all sides.

"I shall go in for more railroads, more factories, higher wages, shorter hours and cheaper food and meat."

"Whoop! Whoop!"

"I shall go further," continued the newly-elected. "I shall demand protection for home industry, and expansion of the currency, and a more rigid adherence to the principles of economy in all departments of government."

"Go in, Jim—go in!" was cheered.

"Yes, I shall go in, and I shall personally see to it that the prestige of this government is maintained abroad. I will see that we return to Jeffersonian economies. I pledge my word to ever stand up for the Monroe doctrine, and the foreign enemy who would invade our sacred shores must first walk over my dead body!"

"Bully for you, old man!" was the general cry.

"And a word more," said the orator as he wiped the back of his neck and looked around. "I did not seek this great honor, but as it has been thrust upon me, I will accept it and carry America on from posterity to posterity until gold pieces in the hands of the poor shall be a more common sight than marbles in the hands of children. Arise! Shake off your lethargy! Behold for the first time in your lives the dawn of a nation's freedom."

When the meeting had disbanded in a blaze of glory I asked the village cooper if he expected great results from it.

"Do I? Do I?" he repeated. "Why, you must be mighty thick-headed not to see that we shall name and elect the next president and have every blamed congressman under our thumb!"

ASKING TOO MUCH.

"I wish men were like pianos."

"Why?"

"Because pianos are either grand, upright or square."

"Well, men are a great deal like pianos."

"How?"

"You can buy them at a big discount from their list price."—Chicago Tribune.

NO PLACE FOR BICKERING.

"A balloon club has just been organized in Paris."

"Well, let's hope the members will not fall out."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

A DIFFERENCE OF OPINION.

Mrs. Jones—I suppose marriage is a lottery?

Mrs. Bickers—Oh! I don't know. I consider it a game of skill.—Puck.

THE MEN WHO GIVE ADVICE.

I call the world's a stage—
And who can doubt it any—
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The prompters are too many.
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OVERHEARD ORDERS.

Merchant—If the man was out, why did you not wait until he came back, as I told you?

Messenger—There was a notice on the door what says: "Retain at Waust."—Town Topics.

HE WAS QUITE SURE.

Irate Father—Are you sure you love my daughter for herself alone?

Suitor—Quite sure. If she marries me I shall never ask any of her relatives to live with us.—N. Y. Journal.

HER REASONS.

Lawyer—So you want a divorce from your husband, the flying-machine inventor. What are your reasons?

Client—Well, he is flighty, and his machines ain't—Judge.

SOME OTHER GIRL.

Chapple—The fortune teller said I was to marry soon! What do you think of that?

Mrs. Peachily—You can't prove it by mel—Puck.

A GREAT MAN'S RETURN.

In school the other boys with ease
Contrived to spell him down;
To-day they're making costly plans
To welcome him to town.
—Chicago Times-Herald.

SURPRISING.

Mrs. Gotham—Here, sir, is some whisky which I have had in my cellar for 20 years.

Col. Kaintuck—Well! well! How did it get lost?—N. Y. Weekly.

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FUNNY FOLKS

Sure to Find It.

"Bridget," he said to the family maid, "I am unexpectedly called out for the evening, and I want you to see that your mistress gets this note."

"Yes, sorr," responded Bridget. "I'll lave it in the pocket of the trousers ye've just taken off, then she'll be sure to find it."—Spare Moments.

They Must Have It.

Men may live and be happy,
'Tis claimed, without books,
And some day fair science
May banish the cooks;
But never while people
Still labor and hope
Will men agree to
Dispense with soft soap.
—Chicago Times-Herald.

FINISHED FOR HIS HONESTY.

"So your boy is in the house of correction?"

"Yes, I'm sorry to say! He was always so honest, and when he stole anything he always brought it home, and that's how he got caught!—Heiterer Welt.

Small Boy Speaks.

I don't want to be an angel,
And with the angel's stand;
I'd rather be a drum-major,
And lead the village band.
—Chicago Daily News.

Domestic Catastrophe.

"Then there is no hope?" said the man desperately.

"None," she calmly replied. "The ice-man must have stolen it."

She had saved a piece of pie from luncheon for his dinner, and now it was gone.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Just in Vogue.

"Clementine, what did you do with that certain goods you bought last week?"

"Well, it was entirely too gay and loud for curtains, so I made a shirt waist of it."—Chicago Record.

An Instance.

She—Do you honestly believe that we women have such a failing for anything that is reduced?

He—Well, there is Miss Antique, whose age is 23—reduced from 38.—Puck.

A Vexatious.

The nightgown shall be fitted with music,
But no one can understand
Why the tomato goes
On the fence to pose
As the manager of the band.
—Washington Star.

SUITED TO THE POST.

"My position is quite a sinecure—I have really nothing to do."

"My dear fellow, you are quite equal to it."—Ally Sloper.

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Another Hardon Added.

Mrs. Gotham—I hear your husband has brought you two bestsides.

Mrs. Church—That's right.

"Good gracious! Isn't one bestside enough to have to look under every night, without having two?"—Yonkers Statesman.

Bit of Everyday Philosophy.

Old Lady—What time does the next train go to Yonkers?

Ticket Seller—Twelve o'clock.

Old Lady—Dear me! Isn't there one before that?

Ticket Seller (calmly)—Madam, there is never one before the next.—Harlem Life.

The Brute.

Mrs. Younghouse—How did you know the pie I made for dinner to-day wasn't the same as the one I made yesterday?

Younghouse—Because it gave me a different kind of pain in my stomach.—N. Y. World.

A FRENCH SOUL.

"Where's your bottle of cough medicine, Josiah?"

"What do you want with it?"

"Well, you won't take it, and as it cost 65 cents it shan't be wasted. I'm going to polish the piano with it."—Chicago Record.

The Ideal and Real.

How our hearts with joy uprise
When within them love has birth
Love may lift us to the skies—
Marriage draws us down to earth.
—Harlem Life.

POPULAR SCIENCE.

Susie—Oh, mamma, I'll never disobey you again!

Mamma—Why, Susie, what have you done?

Susie—Well, I drank my milk at lunch and then I ate a pickle; and the milk said to the pickle: "Get out!" and the pickle said: "I won't!" and they are having an awful time.—Harlem Life.

As It Should Be.

Ben and Ann the parson sought,
And soon were much elated;
For Ben-fitted was the groom,
And the bride was Anna-mated.
—Chicago Daily News.

His Memory.

"Did you ever find that when you stood up to talk before an assemblage that you forgot everything you ever knew?"

"No," answered Senator Sorghum. "I never was investigated."—Washington Star.

Stylish Amelities.

Nero—What do you think was the real reason that I fiddled while Rome was burning?

Queen of Sheba—To add to the torture of the populace, I suppose.—N. Y. World.

A Way Out of It.

Boarder—Really, madam, I cannot wipe myself dry with such a small towel.

Landlady—Very well; I'll tell the chambermaid to bring you less water.—Tit-Bits.

About the Size of It.

Ideals die too fast," it said,
But then they should we mourn;
For everyone that shuffles off
At least two more are born.
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FRESH FROM THE PAWNSHOP.

Mother (to her son, just home from college)—What is that number on your overcoat for?

Son—It's the counter number—I was at the theater.

Mother—But here are your trousers! You didn't leave them at the counter, too, did you?—Heiterer Welt.

Proportions.

"He's a tad politician!"

"They may be him. Were they fair to him?"

"He's little, but he's squize."—Detroit Journal.

Not Sparring of It.

"Mrs. Jawger seems to be quite a liberal-minded woman."

"O, yes; she's always willing to give other people a piece of it."—Philadelphia Bulletin.

In Doubt.

"He said you had a beautifully generous figure?"

"I wonder if he meant my dowry or my 180 pounds."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

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—Harlem Life.

POPULAR SCIENCE.

Susie—Oh, mamma, I'll never disobey you again!

Mamma—Why, Susie, what have you done?

Susie—Well, I drank my milk at lunch and then I ate a pickle; and the milk said to the pickle: "Get out!" and the pickle said: "I won't!" and they are having an awful time.—Harlem Life.

As It Should Be.

Ben and Ann the parson sought,
And soon were much elated;
For Ben-fitted was the groom,
And the bride was Anna-mated.
—Chicago Daily News.

His Memory.

"Did you ever find that when you stood up to talk before an assemblage that you forgot everything you ever knew?"

"No," answered Senator Sorghum. "I never was investigated."—Washington Star.

Stylish Amelities.

Nero—What do you think was the real reason that I fiddled while Rome was burning?

Queen of Sheba—To add to the torture of the populace, I suppose.—N. Y. World.

A Way Out of It.

Boarder—Really, madam, I cannot wipe myself dry with such a small towel.

Landlady—Very well; I'll tell the chambermaid to bring you less water.—Tit-Bits.

About the Size of It.

Ideals die too fast," it said,
But then they should we mourn;
For everyone that shuffles off
At least two more are born.
—Chicago Daily News.

FRESH FROM THE PAWNSHOP.

Mother (to her son, just home from college)—What is that number on your overcoat for?

Son—It's the counter number—I was at the theater.

Mother—But here are your trousers! You didn't leave them at the counter, too, did you?—Heiterer Welt.

Proportions.

"He's a tad politician!"

"They may be him. Were they fair to him?"